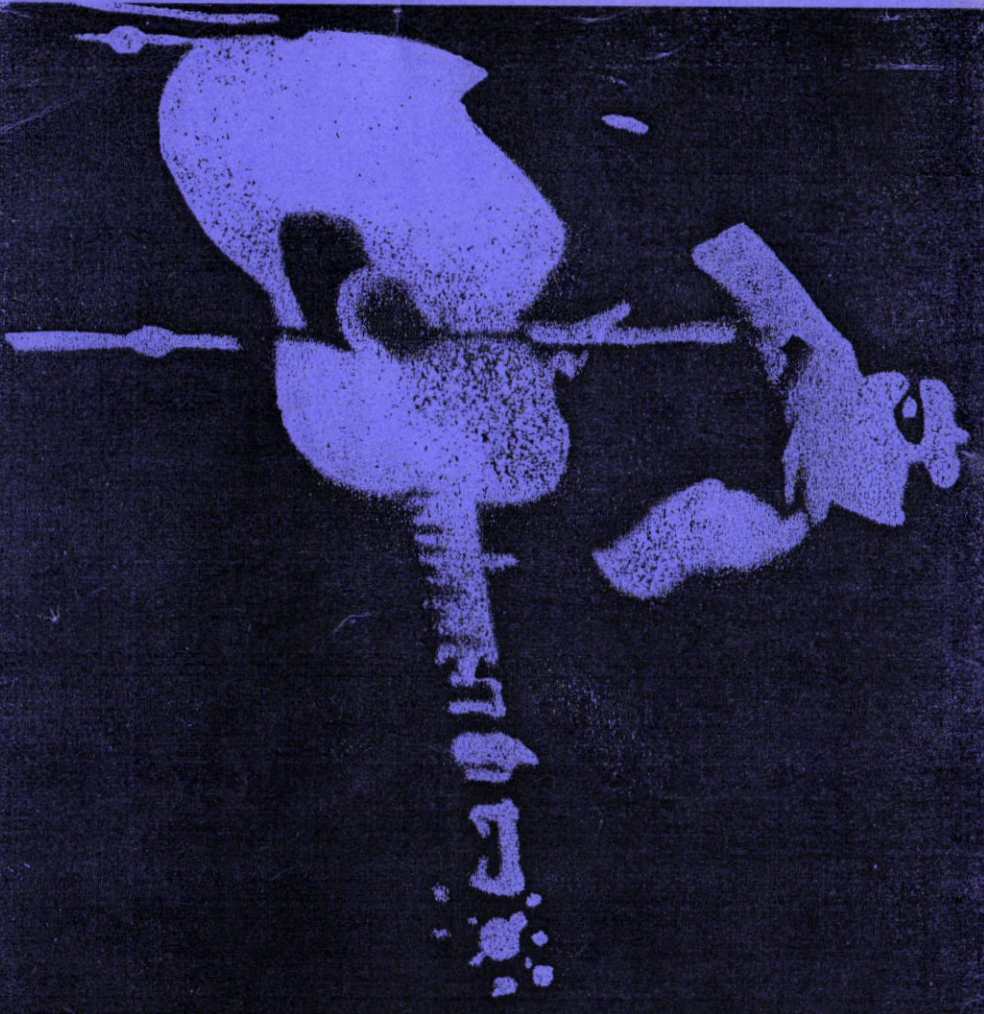




contact:  
makeastencil@  
graffiti.net

SO YOU WANT TO MAKE A

STENCIL





WHY THE HELL WOULD YOU WANT TO MAKE  
A STENCIL ANYWAY? MAYBE YOU DON'T, BUT STENCILS ARE A VERSATILE  
MEDIUM. ANYONE CAN MAKE 'EM, AND THEY CAN BE USED TO EXPRESS  
YOUR IDEAS + FEELINGS ANYWHERE YOU WANT. USE THEM TO BEAUTIFY  
URBAN LANDSCAPES. EXPRESS LOVE OR DISGUST, AND STIMULATE PEOPLE  
IN THE MODERATE ENVIRONMENTS THAT SURROUND US.

# CONSUME LESS

STENCILS PROVIDE ME WITH AN OUTLET FOR MY FRUSTRATION, AND THE DE-  
STRUCTION OF MY APATHY. THEY ARE CHEAPLY PRODUCED, AND RAPIDLY  
APPLIED TO WALLS, BILLBOARDS, FABRIC OR STICKERS. IT WILL SATISFY THE ARTIST  
AND SCAVENGER IN YOU, WHILE YOU REPRODUCE IMAGES MADE FROM REUSED  
AND DUMPSTERED MATERIALS. HOPEFULLY SOMEDAY YOUR IMAGE WILL BE PART  
OF MORE URBAN LANDSCAPES THAN SHEPPARD FAIREYS-ANDRE THE GIANT. MORE IMPORTANTLY  
IT'S FUN

FOR MORE \*\*\* ★  
INSPIRATION: ★

BOOKS: STENCIL GRAFFITI

BY TRISSAN MANCO

BANGING YOUR HEAD AGAINST

A BRICK WALL - BY **BANKSY**

WEBSITES: - [www.bcngraffiti.com](http://www.bcngraffiti.com)

- [www.art-for-a-change.com](http://www.art-for-a-change.com)

- [www.banksy.co.uk](http://www.banksy.co.uk)

[www.workhorsevisuals.com](http://www.workhorsevisuals.com)

[www.stencilgraffiti.com](http://www.stencilgraffiti.com)

[www.cleansurface.org](http://www.cleansurface.org)

[www.inthetream.com](http://www.inthetream.com)

**ZINES:** the walls are alive! - the walls are  
alive@hushmail.  
com

STENCIL ART - available@justseeds.org

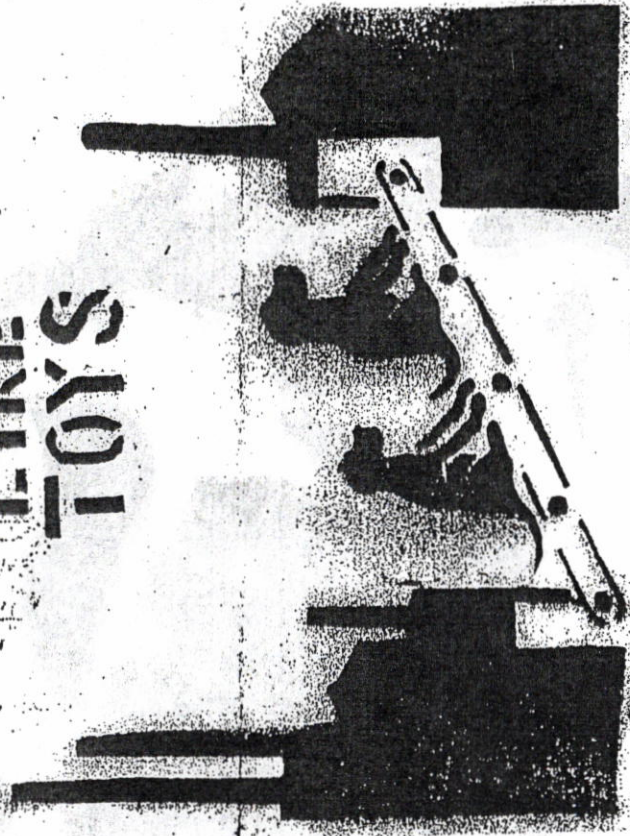






PUPPIES DONT NEED TO  
BE MASS PRODUCED

LIKE  
TOYS



SUPPORT ANIMAL SHELTERS



A LARGE PORTION OF  
HAS BEEN APPROPRIATED FROM  
TO WHOMEVER PUT THAT TOGETHER.

IS ANTI COPYRIGHT (UNLESS OF COURSE YOU ARE CORPORATE SWINE TRYING TO MAKE  
A BUCK OFF OF DISSENT) AND IS ENCOURAGED TO BE REPRODUCED. (AS OF  
RIGHT NOW STAPLES USES OLD GROWTH FOREST, SO PLOFF YOUR COPIES  
COPIES, OR SUGGESTIONS CONTACT THE  
EMAIL ON THE BACK. IF ANYONE NOT  
PART OF THE MALE GENDER HAS IMAGES THEY  
WOULD LIKE TO SEND ME I WOULD ENJOY  
PUTTING THEM IN FUTURE VERSIONS OF THIS  
ZINE. I APOLOGIZE FOR THE IMBALANCE.

THE TEXT INSIDE  
THE WALLS ARE ALIVE! THANK

ALL OF THE CONTENT INSIDE  
YOU ARE CORPORATE SWINE TRYING TO MAKE  
AS OF  
FOR MORE





THANKS TO ALL THE DIFFERENT ARTISTS WHOSE  
SKOT, JONE, DEADBOLT, BANKSY, NO ONE, AND  
"WORK IVE STOLEN FOR AESTHETICS"

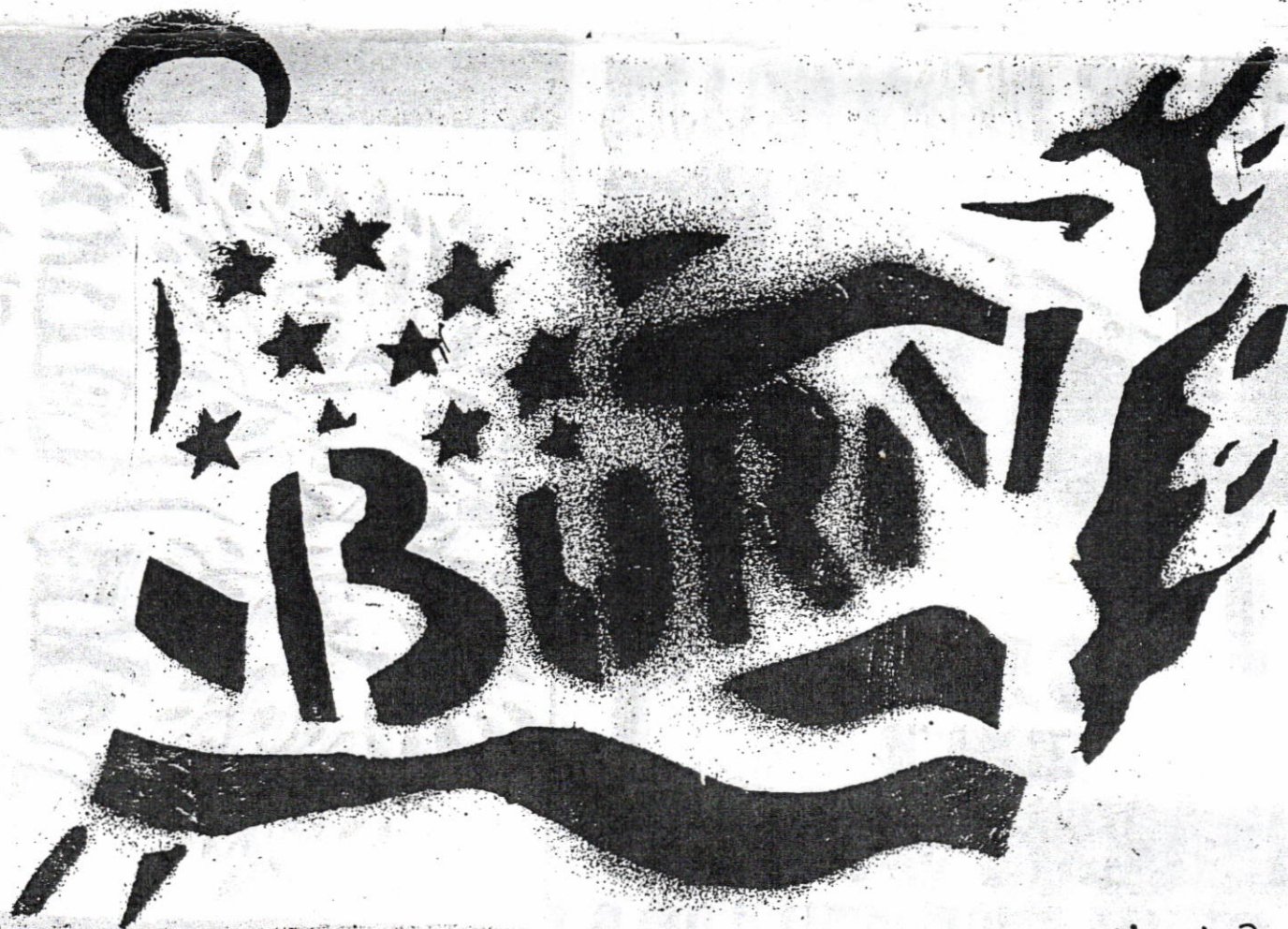
ELOKIN

XXXX??

THESE WALLS CAN TALK...



☠ H ALL STARTS WITH A  
THOUGHT OR A FEELING... AND  
CAN BE SAID REALLY LOUD  
WITH A CAN OF PAINT!



do i have to say anything else? ...



MY SECOND STENCIL. MADE FOR A PARTY IN MEXICO CITY. PAINT  
 -BRUSHED ON (DUMPSTERED) STICKER PAPER. STUCK ALL AROUND  
 THE ZOO AND GIVEN TO PEOPLE DURING THE CARNIVAL  
 APRIL - (THE ZOO IS THE MAIN SQUARE IN MEXICO CITY)

VIVA EZLN

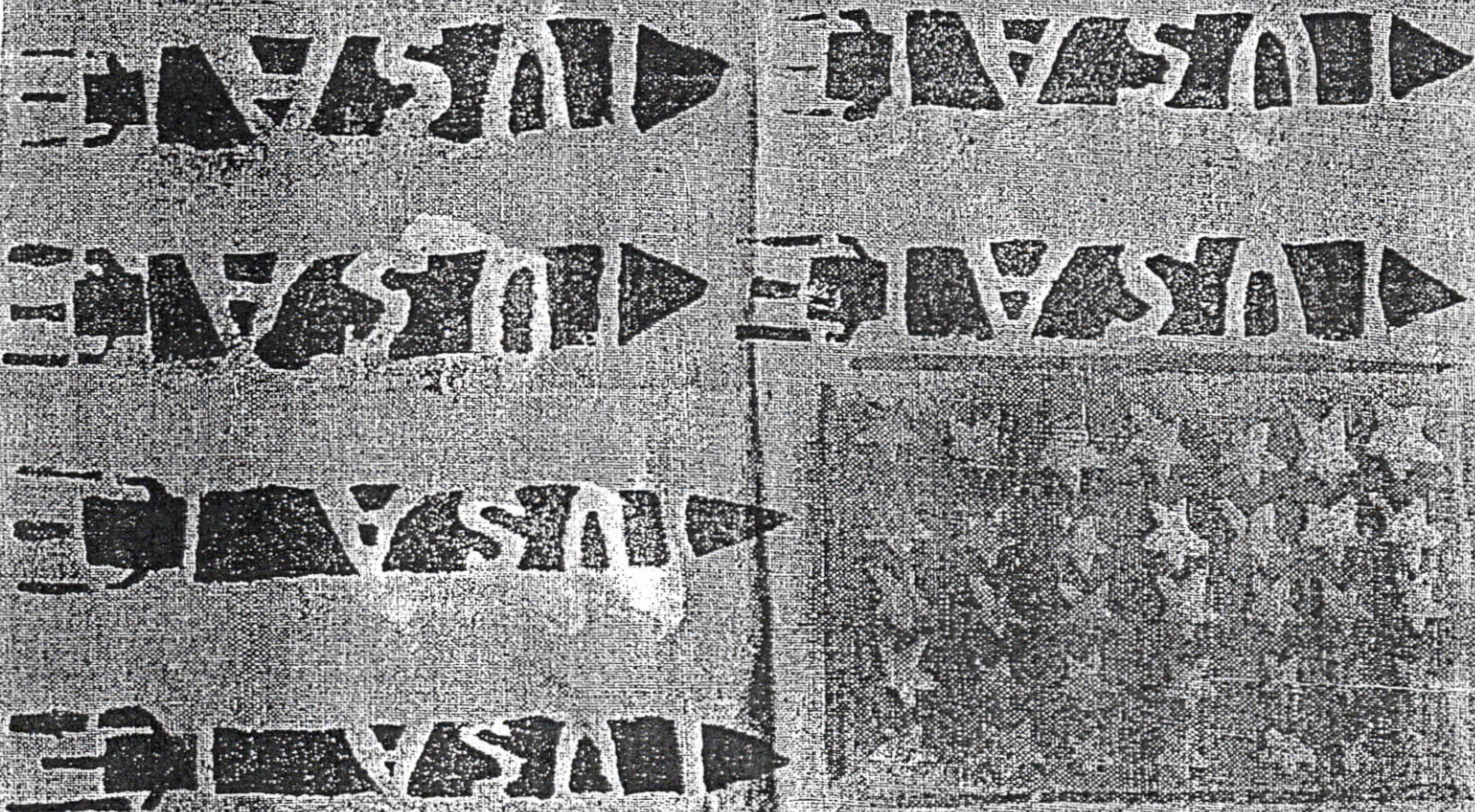
2 DIFFER-  
 ENT  
 STENCILS  
 (black +  
 red)



SKETCH IN MY  
 JOURNAL FROM A PHOTO  
 OF A ZAPATISTA  
 WOMAN



HOW I BEGAN! \*





## SOME TIPS:

**MATERIALS:** ive used everything I can find from corrugated cardboard to drawing paper, and depending on how long you want your stencil to last should determine your materials.

- **corrugated cardboard-** I never use it, cos I don't get the detail I want from it and it falls apart real quick. But for one night, slogan stencil it may be useful.
- **cereal boxes/Manila paper-** Easy to cut, not very durable and will get "fuzzies" in the corners where cuts are made. Many different sizes can be found, the most popular being folders.
- **Matte board-** 1.5 mm thick. Etc... is very strong but can be a pain in the ass to cut. You can get this in sizes up to, usually whatever you want. And it'll last long
- **Plastics-** if it's thin enough (and easy) to cut then go for it. It'll be durable and able to be manipulated for detail. TRY 5 mil mylar
- **Acetate-** pretty flimsy but gets sturdier with more layers of paint (so don't peel) easy to cut and very available. Not the best if you're putting stuff on walls cos its thin. So bring tape.

Any and all of these materials can be scavenged from the trash. Either at places like Kinkos, or office buildings, and the dumpsters of construction sites. and it helps when your friends work in art and office supply stores!

## DON'T GET CAUGHT

YOU NEVER PLAN ON GETTING CAUGHT, BUT IT IS BEST TO BE PREPARED FOR ANYTHING, AND EVERY THING.

WHAT TO DO IF STOPPED/QUESTIONED/SEARCHED BY THE COPS:

- 1) HAVE A GOOD EXCUSE AS TO WHY YOU ARE OUT AT SUCH A TIME AND WHY YOU ARE WHEREVER YOU MAY BE, AND WHAT YOU'RE DOING.
- 2) YOU MAY GIVE THEM BELIEVABLE FALSE INFORMATION. HAVE A CITY, ZIP CODE, ADDRESS, AND PHONE # MEMORIZED IN CASE. (THIS IS BREAKING THE LAW, IF THEY FIGURE IT OUT.)
- 3) BE COMPLETELY CALM. REMEMBER: YOU DIDNT DO ANYTHING WRONG.
- 4) BE IGNORANT AS TO WHY YOU WERE CHOSEN TO BE FUCT WITH.
- 5) ASK QUESTIONS: AM I BEING DETAINED? AM I UNDER ARREST? (if not then you can legally leave!) WHY ARE YOU SEARCHING ME? SAY I DO NOT CONSENT TO BE SEARCHED WHEN THEY DO! AND FIND OUT IF THEY LIKE DOUGHNUTS OR BAGELS.

Remember: they would just arrest you if they knew you were doing anything illegal. so dont give em any reason to lock you up. Keep your mouth shut!





## WHILE IN THE STREET

- be quick + stay alert.
- Nighttime provides the best cover
- act nonchalant. bikes or skateboards provide alternative activities.
- wax cardboard make good folders to carry your stencil in. (it won't stick very well to it)
- quart milk containers can hold spray paint cans if opened from the top. carry em in a plastic shopping bag.
- stay aware of your location as you get around
- Always have one or two lookouts.
- be aware of people in cars + windows + other pedestrians. All can be potential cops.
- know when to stop. Just b/c no one has seen you doesn't mean you should carry on. Otherwise, you'll be painting until you are caught and have to run away right after night.

- Don't mix your media. stick with stencils and leave your wheatpaste at home. or vice versa.
- work from smaller pieces to larger pieces if their being done the same night. folks are more likely to report the bigger stuff. so once you do big stuff, get out of the area.
- The same goes for low-visibility to high visibility. alleys are less likely to be noticed than the front of a bank or city hall.
- Don't shake your can when it's almost empty, you can draw attention to your self. so drop it and change cans or re-fire for the night. the paint wasted is NOT worth getting caught.

LIBERATION  
SELF FROM THE  
FEAR OF A WITHHOLD

**Cutting implements-** X-acto knives are my favorite, snap off blades, box cutters, and multi tool knives all work well according to their sharpness.

### Paint:

- Spraypaint is the easiest way to apply stencils to walls (matte finish dries quicker and looks better according to Banksy)
- Acrylic or fabric paint can be sponged or brushed onto surfaces (walls, fabric and shirts are easier done this way)

**Spray paint caps** can be found at hardware stores. I got mine at the local skate shop. There are caps with wider holes allowing more paint to come out, covering more surfaces, and others doing the opposite.

Latex gloves and a respirator mask are good for safety. (SPRAY PAINT IS TOXIC AND NO GOOD FOR YOUR BODY-  
INSIDE AND OUT)

- I've been told you can put linseed oil on paper stencils to keep them cleaner and preserve them longer. BUT I haven't tried this one out yet and wonder if anyone has any experiences with any methods of preservation.

- I'm going to experiment with diluting paint and using it in a plastic pump spray bottle to try out a less toxic alternative to aerosol cans. (any suggestions)



# TEACH

## STEPS:

- a) Find an image, drawing or text you wish to make into a stencil. Consider the amount of detail in the image and whether it should be simplified. Look for what can be combined in the image so you can create as much floating negative space as possible. You want to look at the shadows and other characteristics in the image that can be "positive" and hold the stencil together. So try to visualize, now, what the stenciled image is going to look like after its been sprayed. This is the toughest part. Try doing linoleum cuts and print them out, or look at photograph negatives, it will help train your brain into thinking in this manner. Sometimes pumping up the contrast will drop some detail creating stencil-like images.
- b) Then (depending on the technology you use) enlarge or reduce the image to the size you want. And once you have the image figured and sized out get a copy on a piece of paper and you'll be ready to transfer it.

## strategy: FOR MAXIMIZING THE IMPACT OF GRAFFITI

### PICKING A TARGET:

- Culture jamming + ALTERATION - PLAY WITH existing messages OR SURROUNDINGS. MAKE PEOPLE LAUGH AND THE SPACE INTERACTIVE. CREATE DIALOGUE ON THE WALLS WITH MANIPULATIVE ADVERTISING.
- STENCIL ART + MESSAGES - SCOUT out spots that are highly visible And well traveled in the daytime and deserted at nighttime (office buildings, highways, overpasses, stadiums, freight trains, oil tankers, tractor trailers, scaffolding billboards, etc. High traffic pedestrian areas like; walls benches, sidewalks, electrical boxes, dumpsters, and any other objects on the street.



All of this information, and more will make your efforts more effective. Often there is at least one person who might have a sense of answers to these questions, but it is really important to democratize the information.

Mapping it out

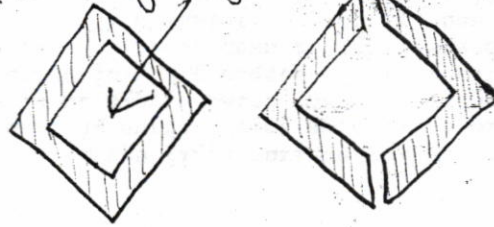
- What are the quickest get-away routes?
- Where are there large concentrations of people?
- a. during the day (to see your artwork)
- b. at night (in the form of cars, drunks, homeless folks) and will they get you in trouble or provide cover?
- Who are the major fuckers in the area and how do they defend their property against creative expressions?
- What streets lead where and how do they connect to each other?
- Are there people who might give you refuge in their homes if you have to flee from the law?
- Where can you go that the police can't go with you (and/or see you)?
- How are different sections of town used (i.e. are there lots of shoppers, businessmen, students, drinkers, etc.)?
- What sections of town are important to the ruling elites and why? (for example: is there a neighborhood slated for destruction to build a freeway - or an area being gentrified for yuppie bars and restaurants?)

- c) You can transfer the image to your material by attaching the copy to the material surface with a glue stick or tape. With paper stencil material you can place a piece of carbon paper between the image copy and the material and trace it on.
- d) Next is the most tedious (be patient) and fun part. Cutting out your stencil. Use your blade and cut out the area you want to be painted, leaving the material that will be a mask for what you don't want painted (remember the floating negative space needs to stay!) you should be cutting on top of a cutting board, piece of linoleum, wood, magazine, or whatever is laying around that can be poked and sliced. Cos it WILL go thru, that's the idea, right?
- e) Now you should have a stencil in your hands. It's a good idea to spray your stencil on paper for testing, to see if it has any blemishes or if its come out just as perfectly as you visualized it. If not do the minor adjustments with your blade and test again. Repeat if necessary.
- f) Now its to the final surface you go. You can apply your art to the desired surface with spraypaint or sponge/paint brush and acrylic or fabric paint. Lay the stencil flat onto the surface and spray in short blasts of paint with your can. It isn't necessary to press down for long steady streams. That's a waste of paint. It's easier to control when you spray for short periods and you can avoid the paint llhave filled up the complete image, and then pull the stencil off and enjoy your new artwork! SMILE!



# HINTS ON THINKING LIKE A STENCIL

Floating negative space



to retain inner diamond the stencil should look like this

NOTICE THE BREAKS IN THE LINES OF MOST LETTERS



# READ A BOOK

MORE THAN ONE CONNECTOR WILL MAKE THE STENCIL HOLD TOGETHER BETTER + LAY MORE FLAT ON THE SURFACE BEING PAINTED

the more complex the picture the more compromises you will have to make regarding floating negative space, the best stencils are those that take this into account and use them as part of the style. with a little practice, it's pretty easy to figure out

how to keep important parts of your composition from popping out and falling on the floor.

- Also decide whether everyone is going to stay together (choose a nearby location to meet and then all go to the getaway location) or just go straight to the destination for escapees and wait until everyone arrives. It may be good if this location had a telephone that could be called by anyone that may get arrested (assuming that one person gets away) Toll-free voice mail also kicks ass in any situation where you need to coordinate when everyone is in different locations, and they can be checked by folks in jail!

- Who you can contact in case shit goes down: housemates, friends, someone you may have mentioned to before the outing that you could put yourself in an arrestable situation, and/or lawyers (a cell phone can be useful, but voicemail is top)

- Find out about local laws and know your rights- key if caught by the authorities.

5) Create action names or a way to communicate without using words. Try using a call that can be made and heard by all participants: barking howling, party sounds (be creative)

6) And it's best not to go on an empty stomach. You may want to dumpster some goodies on the way to your chosen destination



Assign roles - It may be helpful to decide who wants to do what for each run that evening.

Lookouts: Its ideal to have 2 (one looking down either direction of the street)

Artists: alternate! Let everyone express their creativity, concerns, rants, or artwork.

Getaway plan: whether you go by bike, foot or utilize public transportation, everyone should feel comfortable and able to escape by the means you decide to use. Your means should also be quick, accessible and allow you to go where the cops can't (bikes are the best bet!) Also discuss where to meet when on the run - at your bikes, a location in the area, someone's home. How long do you plan on going out? Remember the faster you're outting the sooner you'll be out of the range of the cops.

Since you'll probably be running away from the person who spotted you (though its good to walk if you were a lookout, and not seen or be involved) and towards your transportation/agreed upon getaway location, it would be a good to find a place to hide after you're a ways from your last target (and the person following you) good ideas for this place may be a well-crowded area, a dumpster, a bike trail, parks, gardens, alleys, anywhere you won't be noticed. Here, you can leave all evidence of your involvement in the "illegal" act and also change your appearance with different clothing and/or hairstyles/hats.

# PAINTING WITH STENCILS BY BANKSY



- DRAW OR COPY YOUR IMAGE ON A PIECE OF PAPER
- GLUE THE PAPER ONTO A BIT OF CARD USING GOOD GLUE
- CUT STRAIGHT THROUGH THE DRAWING AND CARD AT THE SAME TIME USING A VERY SHARP KNIFE. SNAP OFF BLADES ARE BEST. THE SHARPER YOUR KNIFE THE BETTER YOUR STENCIL LOOKS.
- IDEAL CARD SHOULD BE ABOUT 1.5mm THICK MUCH FASTER AND ITS TOO DIFFICULT AND BORING TO CUT THROUGH ANY THINNER AND IT GETS STUPID QUICK
- FIND AN UNASSUMING PIECE OF CARD AS A FOLDER TO HOLD YOUR STENCIL IN...
- GET A ROLL OF TAPE AND PRE-TEAR SMALL STRIPS READY TO ATTACH STENCIL TO THE WALL.
- SHAKE AND TEST CANIS OF PAINT BEFORE YOU LEAVE, WHITE FINISH COMES OUT BEST + DRIES QUICKER
- APPLY PAINT SPARINGLY
- MOVE AROUND THE CITY QUICKLY.
- PACE YOURSELF AND REFRESH AS OFTEN AS YOU FEEL INADEQUATE...



# PREPARATION

for stencil missions (modified from "the walls are Alive")

These are a few things you should do before a mission that will ensure your own safety and the folks you are working with.

- You should have a crew of people you know and trust. Preferably someone you've been in sketchy situations with before, so you know how they will react under certain pressure.

## 1) Once your crew is established you can:

- Map out the area you will be working in and have an escape to a strategic location (one that would be ok to go to if followed) or work in areas that you are familiar with.

## 2) Things to take with you:

- A change of clothes. Something to change into if you're seen.
- Latex gloves. To keep your hands evidence free.
- The obvious tools being used to beautify the walls, spraypaint, stencils, paint brush, etc.
- A respirator mask is good to use if you want to be looking too suspicious
- And depending on how high tech you wanna get, 2 way radios are fun, also if you can remain inconspicuous

## 3) Things not to take with you:

- Radical material/propaganda (i.e. flyers, zines, pamphlets, stickers, buttons, patches: the things not good to have if caught and searched.
- Identification: this one is your call. It's not good to have on you b/c if you are caught you have the option of giving the cops false information, but in many places they will just harass you even more. NYC law says you must have valid ID on you at all times.

## 4) Discuss your plan of action with your crew:

- Decide which institutions you plan to target and what your mark may be for each. Though this can be fun to decide after you're out, you need to consider time efficiency. Time is key. If you're out for a long period of time, you are more likely to get caught. Don't let yourself be too comfortable, even if you are at a location you pass everyday. Being comfortable in illegal situations is never a good thing. Just be alert and ready to act, anything can happen.
- Try to start small and make your way up to bigger projects. That way, if you are caught earlier on that night, it's likely your artwork hasn't been noticed by your interrogators and you will only be questioned about what you were seen doing.

Remember they would've already arrested you if they knew you were doing something illegal.